

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-16 were previously cancelled.

Please enter the following amended claims:

E2 17. (Currently Amended) A container-filling device for lost-foam casting systems, including in a single operational combination:

- supporting means for containers with associated vibration means to set said containers into vibration;
- sand-feeding means for feeding dosed quantities of sand into said containers; and
- positioning means associated with said containers to position foam models into said containers and support said models both while the sand is being fed into the containers by said feeding means and while the containers containing said models are being vibrated by said vibration means;

wherein said positioning means include first model gripping means connected to said positioning means for gripping said models and second container gripping means connected to said positioning means for gripping said containers, so that, with said first and second gripping means gripping, respectively, the models and the container, the models ~~and the said container~~ will be substantially connected to each other as a single piece, will be kept firmly in a fixed position with respect to the container during the vibrational motion generated by said vibration means.

18. (Previously added) A device in accordance with Claim 17, including control means to bring said first and second gripping means into their gripping position while said vibration means are operating.

19. (Previously Added) A device in accordance with Claim 17, wherein said first and second gripping means comprise a clamp structure.

20. (Previously Amended) A device in accordance with Claim 17, wherein said second gripping means have associated with them means for bringing them back into their open position.

21. (Previously Added) A device in accordance with Claim 17, wherein said positioning means have associated with them a respective moving structure from which said positioning means can be disengaged.

22. (Previously Amended) A device in accordance with Claim 21, also including mobile equipment movable between a lowered portion and a raised portion with respect to said containers and wherein said sand-feeding means and said positioning means are carried by said mobile equipment.

23. (Currently Amended) A device in accordance with Claim 22, wherein said moving structure includes a frame that is connected as a single piece with the said mobile equipment and sustains said positioning means, which rest on it so that when the said mobile equipment is in its lowered position relative to said container, said positioning means will become transferred to and rest on the said container, so that the moving structure will be disengaged from both said positioning means and said container.

24. (Previously Amended) A device in accordance with Claim 23, wherein said positioning means and the associated moving structure are provided with complementary

centering formations ensuring accurate positioning of said positioning means and the said moving structure relative to the said container.

25. (Previously Amended) A device in accordance with Claim 24, wherein said complementary formations include at least one pin element engagable with a corresponding cavity.

26. (Previously Added) A device in accordance with Claim 24, wherein said complementary formations include a fork structure.

27. (Previously Amended) A device in accordance with Claim 17, further including:

- means for transferring said models to said positioning means;

- shape recognition means associated with said handling means for recognizing, among a set of possible models, a particular type of models that, at that particular moment, is being carried by the handling means, generating a corresponding type identification signal.

28. (Previously Amended) A device in accordance with Claim 27, further including marking means that are individually associated with said containers and processing means for reading said marking means and performing operations on said containers, so that said operations performed on each of said containers are specialized in accordance with the type identification signal generated by said recognition means for the particular type of model inserted in said container.